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NEWS CIVIC ELECTION



BY ANGELA BRUNSCHEOT

Local school board elections rarely make a dent in the consciousness of voters, but if there was ever a time to make an informed choice at the ballot box, this is the year, says one local advocate.

Dale Hudjik, president of the Association for Responsive Trusteeship in Edmonton Schools (ARTES), a new group formed to help raise awareness about the importance of trustees, thinks this election and the coming three years will represent a big turning point for education.

Anger over school closures drives much of the momentum in Edmonton, with 13 schools closed in the past six years, and 71 schools on the public board's review list. The issue has also spilled over into the city-wide election, with incumbent mayor Stephen Mandel putting forward a proposal for school revitalization zones, and partnerships between the city and the school boards.

Gerry Hofs is an organizer with the Community Schools Coalition here in Edmonton, which formed in the wake of local public school closures. As she watched schools closed in the city's centre this spring, the issue really boiled over for her.

"I was enraged," she says. "Why would you close three schools in the inner city? Why would you hit

the most vulnerable parents and students? To me, it was just mean spirited. They have awoken a lot of people's anger."

Add to that new provincial education legislation coming within the year, as well as a public discussion about the role of school board trustees, and the usually subdued public school board election becomes highly charged.

"People are realizing that schools are an important part of communities, of how a city develops," Hudjik says. "All those reasons make this a hot year."

This year, the Alberta School Boards Association as well as ARTES have both worked to raise the profile of the school board elections.

With the election still ongoing, it's hard to get a handle on whether or not the campaigns reached the public. Province-wide in this election, 47 per cent of trustees were acclaimed, compared to 61 per cent in 2007, according to Alberta Education.

Nor are the numbers that different for the Edmonton Public School Board. In the current election, 23 candidates are running, with two acclamations. In 2007, 20 candidates ran and one trustee was acclaimed. In 2004, 21 candidates ran and one was acclaimed. Again in 2001, only one trustee was acclaimed, and 26 candidates ran.

But Dave Colburn, recently acclaimed public school board trustee for Ward D, says there is indeed more momentum this year.

"School closures have become a public issue because the pattern of closing inner city schools has be-

come so relentless and so prominent," he says, "that it's on the minds of many people and has raised questions about the long-term effects and impact on the viability and stability of inner city communities." Colburn has called for a moratorium on school closures.

And this is the first time it's ever seen school board issues cross jurisdictional boundaries into the city council election the way it has in this election.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

The closure of Fulton Place and Capilano schools was the catalyst for Sarah Hoffmann's run for school board trustee in Ward G. Hoffmann doesn't have any experience in the public education system, nor does she have children in Edmonton schools. Instead, the director of research for the Alberta NDP has approached her run from a community perspective.

"If we continue to shut down schools in the heart of our community ... we are going to keep pushing out our young people and hollowing out our core," she says. "That's really unhealthy. I like living on a block with seniors as well as toddlers and teenagers. We need to look out for each other."

George Rice, the incumbent trustee in Ward G, voted for the closure of both Fulton Place and Capilano schools in his ward. He questions whether Hoffman's thinking puts communities ahead of students, pointing to board reports showing the cost of keeping small schools open is 40 per cent higher per stu-

dent, and that students from smaller schools scored lower on 2007 provincial achievement tests.

"Are the children being required to carry the community on their back, so they will have a lesser education?" he asks.

Keeping schools with low enrolments open by renting out space to community groups or other services, is all well and good, he says, but that won't serve students who will have a limited number of staff available to teach them.

He goes on to say that he's fully aware some parents would prefer to send their kids to a small school in the neighbourhood, but it's more important to him that the kids get a good education.

THE ROLE OF TRUSTEES

Part of the appetite for change among some groups comes from a conviction that the public board hasn't listened to their concerns, hasn't thought creatively about how to keep schools open, and isn't very accountable. Dale Hudjik, president of ARTES, says he's sat through many school board meetings in which the trustees didn't seem to do much of anything.

"Basically, the agenda is set by the administration," he says. "There's very little change or leadership being shown by the current board."

Hofs wants to see better communication with the public, and more open public school board meetings. "We can't keep every school open, we know that," she says. "but you have to be able to explain why you are closing that school. There has to

be some very good reasons."

Sile points to outgoing trustee Sue Huff, who stepped down as vice-chair over school closures, as an example of a good communicator. Huff used social media such as blogging and twitter to keep in touch.

School boards are also facing changes from the province. The government will present a new school act this year, and there are several different discussions happening around the delivery of education in Alberta. The expected changes vary widely from increased use of technology to the best way to deliver education for special needs students. The next three years are extremely important for education, Hudjik says, so it's vital that all trustees elected this year are critical thinkers who are engaged with the community.

In a report on the provincial government's vision for elementary and high school education put out this summer, appointing board members or bringing in people from the community was mentioned. Premier Ed Stelmach quickly clarified that he won't get rid of the elected boards, but Hoffman points out that the provincial government also didn't give any previous warning about the centralization of the health boards.

There is an on-going debate in Canada about the relevance of school boards. Hofs says, but the importance of the job is really up to the trustees themselves.

"If they choose to be rubber stamps, they will have all the power of rubber stamps. If they choose to be leaders, they will have the power of leaders."

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BY SCOTT LINGLEY

Every time I go for Japanese food, I'm torn, figuratively speaking, by the competing impulses of either trying something completely different than I usually order, or ordering all the stuff I know I already love. For

this reason, my knowledge of Japanese food is pretty narrow, because I always want to have sushi, beef sashimi/tataki and rainbow maki and I usually don't put up much of a fight with myself.

This time, I thought, was going to be different.

In trying to think of a less-than-usual venue for such adventures, the co-diner and I hit upon Shogun, a sushi/robata place of long-standing that somehow managed to seem tucked away even though it's just a few steps north of Jasper Avenue. Maybe it's the fact that the exterior gives you no idea what to expect when you walk through Shogun's doors. At the moment, you should prepare to watch your step as the water feature right inside the door seems to be slopping a bit into the foyer.

Once you get inside, you might be a little taken aback by just how much there is there. Shogun is sprawling and labyrinthine, decked up by wooden dividers, glass cases, faux-Japanese screens and other obstructions, not to mention there's a row of tatami rooms off to one side for private functions. We could hear other patrons from our table, but we had no visual contact to speak of.

Buttery paint jobs and traces of long usage aside, Shogun is quite nice, with sturdy wooden furniture, a tasteful veneer of Japaneseness, and lovely pottery dishes that look like each piece could have been made by hand. The service is friendly too. When we explained our predicament to our host, he divvied up our large Kirin and went through the menu with us, trying to suggest ways out of our usual eating patterns. The problem was, he liked all the same stuff we did, but he did convince us to try one of the house specialties – some cooked maki that went by the enigmatic and exotic name Dragon Eye (\$15.95).

(Also we got rainbow maki (\$13.95), goma ae (\$4.95), and salmon (\$4.95/two pieces), toro (\$5.50) and chop chop (\$5.50) for sushi, as usual.)

Waiting for the first salvo of seafood, we plucked at the serving of goma ae with our chopsticks, pulling out succulent slivers of dark green

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steamed spinach swirled with sweet black sesame sauce. It wouldn't have kept us busy long, but the sushi arrived in short order and gave us something else to focus on. Co-diner and I agreed that the salmon was especially velvety and toothsome, but there was certainly nothing wrong with the fleshy, pearl-esque tuna belly strewn with green onions. The chop chop – a seaweed envelope of rice under chopped scallops and flying fish roe bound with mayonnaise – was just about perfect, according to my co-diner, not too mayonnaise and loaded with crisp orange beads of roe.

The rainbow roll was as expected, a big wheel of inside-out maki with strips of shrimp, salmon, tuna and sushi, as usual.)

red snapper alternated with avocado on the outside and a tube of crabstick with fish roe on the inside, as opposed to the expected flecks of tem pura. I'm more of a tempura girl myself, but I soldiered on.

Finally, the Dragon Eye roll landed before us. It was huge – eight half-cap-sized pieces of maki filled with salmon, crabstick and green onion, dipped in batter and flash fried with a tub of dip made with yakitori sauce, mayo and flying fish roe. I have to admit I was skeptical, but that thing was delicious and filling in a way I don't usually expect sushi to be. The salmon and green onion dominated the flavour, even when you doused your portion in the thick, creamy dip. We gave up halfway through, realizing that all of it was cooked and would make a good midnight snack. A sushi doggie bag – this was a rare occasion.

Sushi lovers will be glad to know that Shogun offers 50 per cent off selected sushi on Tuesday nights, and sushi haters will be glad to know that Shogun offers robata tables where diners can watch their food being cooked.

There are two reasons to stop over looking this Japanese gem. Go find your own.



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— Paul Heinbecker, a prominent former Canadian diplomat who represented Canada at the UN, commenting on Canada's failure to win a seat on the UN Security Council.

VOTING FOR A ONE-ISSUE CANDIDATE NOT THE BEST WAY TO MAKE YOUR CHOICE

With the civic election campaign limping towards the finish line, perhaps we should be thankful for the presence of Envision Edmonton. If nothing else, this mysterious airport lobby group has injected some spark into a listless campaign.

Envision Edmonton has changed tact since its petition to force a plebiscite on the closing of the City Centre Airport was rejected. If you do a search on Envision Edmonton, it will take you to a renamed site, called Demand The Vote. Having lost the battle to force a plebiscite, Envision Edmonton has turned its attention to trying to get a slate of pro-airport candidates elected. On its site, Envision Edmonton/Demand The Vote lists "airport friendly" candidates, whom they describe as being "pro airport and pro democracy," which would indicate that those not on the list are anti-airport and anti-democracy. This kind of inane double-speak is just what we'd expect from U.S. election campaigns.

The Envision Edmonton people — whenever they are, their donor lists remain a secret — seem to feel that they've been created by city council, which rejected their petition, hence the "demand the vote" focus.

The city clerk's office found that the petition was not valid on two vital fronts. First, the clerk's office determined there were not enough valid signatures on the petition, and second, the petition did not arrive in the required 60 days after the council decision. So, it was undemocratic for council to reject a petition signed by some 70,000 Edmontonians?

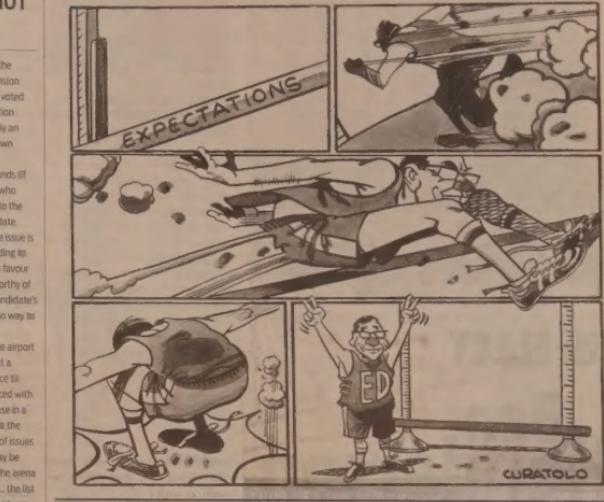
It was not. There was no valid reason why council should have accepted a petition

BY THE NUMBERS • BROWSING NUMBERS

The once powerful Explorer web browser is failing in popularity in Canada, recording the lowest usage numbers in its history. Source: StatCounter

Market share for browsers in Canada:

49.3%	29.6%	10%
Internet Explorer	Firefox	Google Chrome



POINT OF VIEW • POLITICS

Wake Me When It's Over



OUTSIDE POLITICS MAURICE TOUGAS

CIVIC ELECTION 2010 WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS ONE OF THE DULEST ON RECORD. STILL, YOU SHOULD VOTE

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote a column urging first-time and/or indifferent voters to get off their duffa and vote.

Now, with the election just four days away, I confess that I am having a hard time holding my own advice. My case of civic election fever is decidedly low grade. I will, of course, dutifully drag myself to my designated polling station on Monday, but I won't be putting my X next to my choices with much enthusiasm.

With the exception of a couple of wads, this vote is an all-time snoozer.

The result of the mayoralty is as certain as a Harlem Globetrotters win over the Washington Generals. It was nice of Stephen Mandel to spend some of his no doubt substan-

tial campaign war chest on pretending it was a race, but realistically this was a non-starter. Incumbents can, of course, be beaten. Jan Reimer was defeated, but that was because her politics had become too left-wing for the general populace. She lost to Bill Smith, but he went all Franklin Roosevelt on us and sought a fourth term. By then the public was exhausted by his vacuous salesmanship, and he lost to upstart Mandel. If history is any indication, in three more years we'll be royally sick of him, too, but for now Mandel is the man.

The closest Mandel has to an opponent is David Doornkamp guy, or whatever his name is. He may be a superstar in the circles accountants hang around in, but to the average Edmontonian he's got less name recognition than a backbench Tory MLA. Doornkamp, to give him his proper due and correct name, has an impressive record of community service and fundraising for worthy causes (does anyone raise funds for UNWorthy causes?), but until he ran for mayor he was a household name only in his own household. Aside from zero profile, he has two other strikes against him: he is the candidate for Envision Edmonton, the shadowy and moneyed group of municipal airport sup-

porters that I have grown to actively dislike, and he is a former candidate for the provincial PCs of Edmonton Goldbar. If Doornkamp was a legitimate candidate, he would have entered the race months ago, instead of entering at nearly the last minute.

The other candidate who has at least put some money and effort into his campaign is Daryl Bonar, a guy so little known that he makes David Doornkamp look like a superstar. Bonar has some campaign ideas that are, shall we say, "interesting," including giving a \$5,000 rebate to post-secondary students who stay and work in Edmonton for two years. This is the kind of wildly expensive campaign promise you might expect from a candidate for the mayor of Crazytown, or worse, a New Democrat. (Apparently, though, he's a dreamboat. As Edmonton Journal columnist Paula Simons wrote: "And his dark brooding physical charm — think of the young Marlon Brando as Stanley Kowalski — is magnetic." Sounds like Paula needed a cigarette after that interview.)

So the mayoralty is a snoozer. What of the ward races?

I live in Ward 5, home to the nearly-unbeatables council fixture Karen Leibovici. It appears potential can-

TUGAS cont'd on pg. 6

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POINT OF VIEW - ODDS 'N ENDS

Stuff To Do With Your Time



MY TOWN SCOTTLINGLEY

FROM LITTEST TO PROG METAL, BACK END OF OCTOBER HAS PLENTY GOING ON

Where the hell did the first half of October get to? This golden weather we've been enjoying has distracted me (and possibly others) from the rapid onrushing of dark, miserable winter. It also lends some credence to the assertion of UCLA professor of geography Laurence Smith's recently published *The World in 2050: Four Forces Shaping Civilization's Northern Future* that northern countries are set to become economic

ones's surprise, the Prime Minister's Office has already decreed Globe & Mail scribe Martin as a partisan lack without providing any evidence that anyone there has read it. My own intense dislike for the calculating, obstructionist Harper government tends to be of the knee-jerk variety, so I'm hopeful Lawrence's hook will endow me with a more thoroughly reasoned, nuanced dislike of our Andrew in Chief.)

There are also some exciting music events on the horizon in the second half of October, above and beyond this week's release of the sure-to-be-awesome new album by American prog-metallers Intronaut, Valley of Smoke.

On Oct. 22 the Pawn Shop invites you to explore the secrets of musical longevity with Victoria's own Nomeansno, the supernaturated punk rock trio that have thankfully refused to heed the advice to "give

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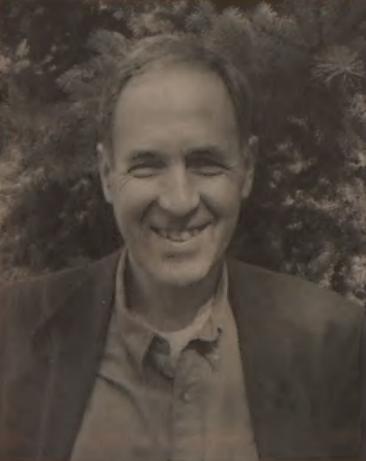
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powerhouses and the envy of more equatorial nations, which will be basically SOL because of global warming. The coastal inundation, water scarcity, heat waves and massive displacement of human populations ravaging the more temperate regions four decades hence – not a problem of ours. If anything, the enviro-destruction attending the warming of the globe might just free up more of the natural resources the rest of the world will covet, and we'll finally get that Arctic trade route to the Far East we've been dreaming of to these last 500 years. To bad so many market fundamentalists don't believe in climate change, or they could throw themselves a little self-congratulations party.

In the nearer term, there's plenty

"Lut-fist"). More than a festival of nonfiction – though the presence of lettered luminaries like David Suzuki, John Ralston Saul and Will Ferguson does add thrust to that angle – LitFest also allows you face-time with idiosyncratic Winnipeg filmmaker Guy Maddin, anointed Can-fictionalist Joseph Boylan (*Three Day Road*) and local slow food guru/cookbook author Juliana Mimanide, to name but a few attractions. Ask your Google about Edmonton LitFest's schedule of events, which kicks off Oct. 14. That way you won't show up empty-handed for the U of A Festival of Ideas on November.

(Speaking of books, I'm looking forward to getting my hands on a copy of Lawrence Martin's *Harperland: The Politics of Control*. To no

it up, granddads.) At 56 and 48 respectively, Rob and John Wright are still the most formidable rhythm section in Canadian music and they aren't about to close their big yaps about the ills of society after more than three decades in the business. Upping the ante will be Edmonton ex-pat/extraordinarily cerebral musical polymath Ford Pier.

If you haven't had a chance to check out McDougall United Church as a music venue, native Iowa native Josh Ritter and his Royal City Band give you a pretty good reason to do so on Oct. 30. A Folk Fest fave, Ritter joins the likes of Hayden and Bonny "Prince" Billy in contributing to the venue's godless-hipster cachet, which seems like the thing to do on the weekend before Samhain.

TOUGAS cont'd from pg. 5

dicates think Leibovici is unbeatable, too, since I could find only one website from the other candidates, and I have yet to receive so much as a scrap of literature from any of them. If Leibovici ends up with less than 75 per cent of the vote, I'd be surprised.

I'm a little envious of people who live in wards with interesting campaigns. Wards 3 and 11 are unencumbered by incumbents, and therefore wide open to anyone to win. (I'm picking Chinwe Okelu to win in Ward 11; I have no idea of who might win in Ward 3.) Incumbent Tony Caterina is facing a well-organized challenge from Brendan Van Alstine, and name recognition in former

Journal columnist Scott McKeen if airport candidate Don Kozak upsets Kim Krushell – or even comes close – would indicate the depth of feeling over the airport might be deeper than I thought.

Elsewhere, though, I just don't see any major upsets in the making. The airport debate seems to be the major issue, such as it is. But to me the much more interesting question is the arena debate, which has been suspiciously muted, almost like nobody wanted to talk about it because it's just too hot an issue to handle. Overall, this has been a surprising campaign. The school board races have been more hotly contested (see Angela Brunschot's story on

the school board vote on pg. 3) than the civic vote, with a number of candidates spending surprisingly big bucks on their campaigns. (I sense a number of candidates are using the school board vote as a springboard to provincial politics.)

Still, despite a weak slate of candidates and no issue to focus upon, you should still vote. It's your duty as a citizen. And besides, according to the Local Authorities Elections Act, you're entitled to three hours off work to vote! If that doesn't provide some incentive, nothing will.

If you can't get enough of this kind of stuff, check out my new blog at mauricetougas.wordpress.com. It's a work in progress, so be patient.

NEW COLUMN STARTING NEXT WEEK

Spies Ran Wild In WWI

THE STRAIGHT DOPE CECIL ADMITS DID LOOSE LIPS REALLY SINK SHIPS? CECIL DIGS INTO THE HISTORY BOOKS TO FIND OUT

I ran across the phrase "loose lips sink ships" on the sports page the other day (in some article about Twittering athletes harming their teams). I know this was part of a WWII propaganda campaign to keep civilians from talking about troop movements and shipping schedules. But did loose lips actually sink any ships? That is to say, did the loss of an Allied vessel ever directly result from inadvertent civilian disclosure of military secrets? A difficult question, but that's why there's a Cecil. —Curtis Edmonds, Hillsborough, New Jersey

Huh. And all this time everybody's been blaming my mom and dad.

Concern about maritime blabbermouths arose in Britain during the First World War when enemy U-boats started going after merchant ships. And with good reason — Britain was awash in German spies, or at any rate suspected spies. By the end of the war British counterintelligence was reading the mail and cables of more than 13,500 individuals. While this undoubtedly reflected wartime paranoia to an extent, authorities turned up enough evidence to try 31 alleged spies between 1914 and 1917 and deport 1,700 suspicious characters.

A primary goal of German espionage early in the war was finding out about ship movements, and eavesdropping on dockside scuttlebutt was the best way to do that, given the primitive technology of the day. Some notable cases:

- Dutch national Haccke Janssen posed as a travelling cigar salesman, hanging out around the docks in Southampton to spy on ship movements and sending the information to German intelligence encoded in the form of sizable cigar orders destined for naval ports — this despite the fact that naval ports weren't known as hotbeds of cigar consumption. Another Dutch "cigar salesman," Willem Roos, sent similar orders from Edinburgh. Neither Janssen nor Roos had any inside information or access to military documents; they relied entirely on what they could see and hear. The two men were executed as spies in 1915. (For Janssen it was a short visit; he'd been in the country only two and a half months.)

- Ernst Waldemar Melin, a Swede, was recruited by the Germans to, as he later put it, "go to the ports round England and Scotland and try to find out what I can." Provided with a code book and trained in naval identification, he sent letters to his superiors containing secret messages written in lemon juice, an espionage tech-



nique so sophisticated it's been used by schoolchildren for generations. He was caught and executed in 1916.

- Peruvian Ludovic Hurwitz-Zender was also recruited by the Germans to report on ship movements. Posing as a merchant and sending messages coded as commercial orders, he was found out when he started ordering large quantities of sardines, which were out of season at the time. He too was executed in 1916.

You see our problem here: Lots of Allied ships were sunk, and numerous spies were listening for loose lips. However, most of those captured were bumblers who got caught before they could do much damage — successful agents kept a lower profile. I came across only one instance of a spy who (a) collected info on ship movements and (b) claimed responsibility for sinking a ship. However, (a) didn't lead to (b). It's an interesting story just the same.

Swashbuckling adventure! Fritz Joubert Duquesne, a native of South Africa, lost much of his family during the brutal Second Boer War of 1899-1902 and developed a lifelong hatred of the British. Among other escapades, he claimed to have disguised himself as a Russian sailor in 1916 and boarded HMS Hampshire in Scotland along with Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, who had commanded British forces during the Boer War. Duquesne said he alerted a German U-boat to the Hampshire's approach, then escaped on a life raft.

True or not, the ship was sunk, kill-

ing Kitchener and many others.

During the Second World War Duquesne organized 32 German agents in the U.S. into what became known as the Duquesne spy ring, which sent reports on ship movements and other sensitive matters to the Germans. The ring was broken up by the FBI in 1941, and its leader was sentenced to a long prison term. Admittedly Duquesne helped sink the Hampshire in one war and spied on ship movements in a different one, the loose lips that sent the vessel to the bottom were his own, and he may have invented his role in the ship's demise altogether. So really this isn't the greatest example. However, I'm doing the best I can.

Although the "loose lips" slogan was introduced in 1942, there's no evidence of shipping losses due to talkative civilians during the Second World War. The Nazi code-breaking agency known as the B-Dienst learned most of what it needed to know about ship convoys by decoding intercepting Allied radio messages.

Why the slogan then? No doubt it partly reflected the military's habit of fighting the previous war, but it may also have been an attempt to get civilians to keep quiet about the devastation wrought by German subs.

— CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611.

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Why Is The Government So Sour On Raw Milk?



HOLISTIC HEALTH 101 ROBERTA SHEPHERD
RAW MILK DEBATE COMES DOWN TO A MATTER OF PERSONAL CHOICE. WHICH WE DON'T HAVE

Did you know that it is illegal to produce raw milk to Canadian consumers?

I am astounded by this, as many others, because it restricts each consumer's choice to access milk that, in my opinion, is far more health promoting than its pasteurized counterpart.

Pasteurization was introduced by Louis Pasteur, a French chemist and microbiologist. Pasteur drew public attention to the "germ theory," that suggests that germs are the cause of most diseases. Pasteur further dis-

covered that the growth of microorganisms is responsible for the spoilage of milk, and that heating milk kills bacteria in it. Pasteurization extends milk's shelf life and kills harmful bacteria that could lead to illnesses such as diphtheria, salmonella and E-coli poisoning, strep throat, scarlet fever, listeria poisoning, tuberculosis and typhoid fever.

It's certainly a feasible practice to put systems in place for avoiding the contraction of diseases. However, Pasteur neglected to investigate the negative results pasteurization has on raw milk. Much of the nutritional value of milk is destroyed through the process of pasteurization, including beneficial bacteria helpful to the digestive system. Those relying on milk for a portion of their daily nutritional needs will fall short because pasteurized milk has been heated. As I have said many times, when you heat something at high temperatures, such as fat, it reduces its nutritional value.

Possibly most unfortunate to the otherwise "good" reputation of milk

as a health food is that the process of pasteurization makes the calcium available in milk insoluble within the human body. Consequently, although milk contains a great deal of calcium, our bodies cannot absorb and use calcium from pasteurized milk. Something that is grossly overlooked when considering pasteurization is the fact that Louis Pasteur recanted his primary philosophy, the "germ theory," on his deathbed. He refers to the principles of his colleague, French physiologist Claude Bernard, who defined homeostasis and proposed that microorganisms change based on the state of internal environments, such as acidic versus alkaline bloodstreams. Dying, Pasteur said: "Bernard was right, the pathogen is nothing; the terrain is everything." In other words, it's a more worthy pursuit to preserve the health of our bodies. If we maintain healthy bodies through good nutrition and lifestyle, then we're more likely to fight off germs that we're inevitably going to be exposed to anyway.

Humans consumed solely raw

milk before the industrial revolution.

With the industrial revolution came urbanization and many abandoned their primarily agricultural lifestyles. Milk production became an industrial pursuit and cows were no longer free ranging and grass-fed. Cows were now being fed grain-based diets and kept in less sanitary, industrial conditions. Along came pasteurization as increasingly sick cows produced infected milk. We've surely strayed very far from our community-oriented, agrarian lives. We might do well to take a step back there by spending time and money otherwise dedicated to pasteurization on providing dairy farmers with the resources necessary to ensure healthy and well-treated cows.

German-Canadian dairy farmer Michael Schmidt represents great advancement for supporters of raw milk and the bureaucracy around providing raw milk for public consumption. In January 2010, Schmidt, whose farm is about 200 km northwest of Toronto, was acquitted of 19 counts of providing and distributing

raw milk and raw milk products. The law states that raw milk can only be ingested by the owner of the cow providing it. Schmidt allows consumers to buy "cow-shares" on his farm and provides raw milk to cow-share owners. Schmidt's acquittal is a great victory for proponents of raw milk. The following statement made by Schmidt perfectly summarizes what I think is the primary argument in favour of raw milk: "It comes down to can I decide for myself what is good for me or does the government have to decide that?"

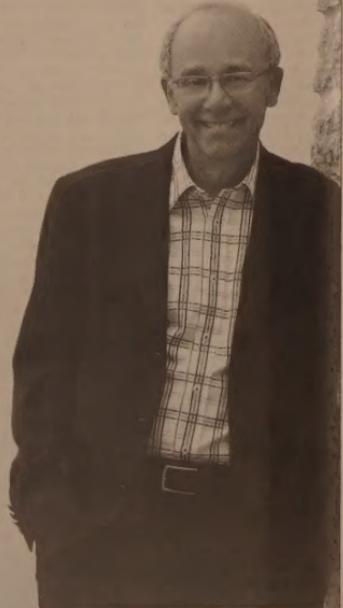
If the government is to be in control of our choices around taking risks and maintaining good health, then why not also impose laws around the consumption of equally risky products such as alcohol, luncheon meats, restaurant food, MSG, food colourings, aspartame and cigarettes? I think that the possibility that harmful bacteria exists in raw milk is not the primary issue here, but rather that our ability to make informed choices is robbed from us due to legislation.

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"I THINK THAT POETRY IS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CALLINGS, BUT THERE IS SOMETHING SERIOUSLY WRONG WITH OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM WHEN POETRY SUPPORTS TRADITIONAL FARMING.

LITTEST SERVES UP A RICH HELPING OF NONFICTION

BY ALISTAIR HENNING

Each October, LitFest, Edmonton's non-fiction festival brings together authors whose ideas sometimes seem unrelated or even contradictory, but spark fresh understandings.

One of the threads weaving through this year's program: Real Food, and how that plays out in Edmonton.

This focus on food is uniquely possible at Edmonton's LitFest due to the festival's focus, in recent years, on both nonfiction and more interactive forms of programming.

Curtis Gillespie, chairman of LitFest's board of directors, shared the reasoning behind LitFest's focus on nonfiction: "A big part of the rationale of moving to a nonfiction festival was really to carve out an identity. We noticed that there were no nonfiction festival in Canada, and thought since we're already bringing in so many great nonfiction writers anyway, why not focus on that?"

"I think the food element," Gillespie continues, "there's two or three things behind that. One of them is that we really found that people loved that interactive element. 'Hey let's talk about food writing and let's do some eating while we're at it.' It was a way to involve local restaurateurs, that's been a big help and really fun. We have a new board member, Jennifer Cockerel-King, who is a great local food writer."

"And I think we've seen, in the last 10 years, a real increase in the amount of interest within the publishing industry in serious food writing. Not just recipe books, books really exploring our food chain. It's become a serious aspect of the book industry, and we want to reflect that. It's always seemed to us that as a way to look at some serious books but also have some fun too."

Indeed, over the last decade, the dinner table has become cultural and political battleground. Which do you prefer (or perhaps more aptly, whose side are you on?): A slow-cooked meal? Molecular gastronomy? Organic vegetables? The tiger diet of raw meat? No longer are you merely and literally what you eat; your choices must reflect your innermost beliefs and values.

LitFest guest Andrew Potter claims, in his new book, *The Autumentum Hoax*, that the rise of organic food in the '80s and '90s was an elitist trend meant to show that our way of living is more authentic than that of the masses. The book as a whole describes the many ways in which we seek a more "genuine" experience for ourselves, to set ourselves apart; while some of the demand for organic food can be traced to health issues, much of the appeal is basically esthetic.

Predating the most recent food movements by several decades is poet Brian Brett, appearing as part of *Bird Brains* at the Downtown Library Theatre on Oct. 23 at 2 p.m. Twenty years ago, Brett and his wife purchased a farm on Saltspring Island, and decided to make a go of it using traditional methods, like mixed crops, and a labour-intensive but human scale of production. His book, *Trauma Farm*, provides a condensed 20-year history of a working farm and reflects on a life lived in defence of real food. Brett writes: "I am a poet, and my wife Sharon is a nurse. I think that poetry is one of the highest callings, but there is something seriously wrong with our economic system when poetry supports traditional farming."

Amy Jo Ehman, a Saskatchewan journalist, came to greater mindfulness about her food's origins much more recently. As detailed in her book, *A Prairie Feast*, the result of her curiosity was a year exploring a 100-mile diet, limiting herself — and her husband — exclusively to food sourced within a 100-mile radius.

Feast outlines the challenges of local sourcing in a prairie context, everything from recipes that need to be altered because hand-milled flour is very different than Robin Hood to dealing with corporate dairies that don't want to tell you where their milk goes.

More personal reflections on conscious food choices may be found in the sumptuous, Alberta-centric book, *We Eat Together*.



er, by Edmonton restauranteur Julianne Mirmande, designer Gabe Wong and photographer Zach Ayotte. It combines recipes and Food photography with personal reflections on food.

Mirmande and Wong will be participating in LitFest at Savour, to talk about how close relationships with food producers has shaped their own experiences, especially as Mirmande prepares to open Terra, a café bistro at the new Hole's Centre.

Many of these local producers they interview are former urbanites who are at some stage of transition back to a small-scale farm existence, in their own quests for meaningful lives; Potter would suggest that Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who practically invented the marketing of the "genuine," would be proud.

Of course, as Curtis Gillespie observes, "I think it's obvious that we're just becoming more aware, as consumers, of what we

put in our body and how we're actually going about producing what we eat. It's related to the environmental movement, there's no doubt about that."

As for all the food-related events at LitFest, Curtis wishes that in addition to getting "a good meal out of it!" attendees will "have a real discussion about what we eat, and why we eat, and how we eat, where it comes from. And also focus on the pleasure of food. These things all matter."

Concluding, Gillespie observes, "Looking at all the events, we really want people to feel like books are not just some inert object, they really are interwoven into our lives, they're really part of our daily lives. They are objects to entertain and inform, but they're also objects to kickstart discussion and dialogue. So that's what we hope that people get out of every session."

LITFEST • FEATURE

Food For Thought

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LITFEST • PREVIEW

The Dart Throwing Chimp

GARDNER LOOKS BACK TO SEE
WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM
FAILED FUTURE PREDICTIONS

BY ANASTASIA ABRAXAS

Dan Gardner doesn't care where his jacket is.

Unlike the scores of fanboy (and yes, they're usually male) writers bent on dissecting future promises broken, Gardner isn't concerned with lampooning technological failures.

Instead, the entry point for his new book *Future Babble* is far more personal: Gardner is a journalist fascinated with the spiralling trajectory and ceaseless conjecture of his trade.

"I tend to have a bit more historical perspective than an average journalist," he explains, or phone from Ottawa, "and I really like to go back and look back at the present problems from past perspectives. It's pretty interesting when you go back into daily journalism, from 15 or 20 years ago, and you look at people's concerns

promise from assumption into reliable fact.

"The problem with looking at failed predictions is that you may be ignoring those that succeeded," Gardner explains.

Enter Philip Tetlock, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Relays Gardner, "he conducted what is, by far, the most comprehensive experiment at expert prediction. In the mid-1980s, he assembled almost 300 experts – economists, local experts, journalists – and had them make predictions. What will happen to apartheid South Africa? Will Quebec separate from Canada? All the sort of predictions you regularly see in the media."

Twenty years of data gathering gave Tetlock nearly 80,000 predictions to analyze. The upshot of this voluminous research? The simple and nearly irrefutable conclusion that, on average, experts did no better than predicting the future than a flipped coin, or in Tetlock's words,

I REALLY LIKE TO GO BACK AND LOOK AT THE PRESENT PROBLEMS FROM PAST PERSPECTIVES. IT'S PRETTY INTERESTING WHEN YOU GO BACK 15 OR 20 YEARS AGO, AND YOU LOOK AT PEOPLE'S CONCERNES AND THE PREDICTIONS THAT DOMINATED THAT TIME.

and the predictions that dominate the journalism of the time.

Little has changed since the dawn of punditry decades ago, he says. "Predictions are constantly in the media. They're full of statements about what tomorrow will be like. It's astonishing to go back to the past, at what they believe is the future and realize how horribly badly we do it."

What elevated Gardner's book above collegial beard-stroking is his deft ability to incorporate academic research and fortify his foundational

"a dart throwing chimpanzee could have done as well as these experts," Gardner says.

Tetlock's research becomes a springboard for Gardner to launch a new query in *Future Babble*, asking two questions: why are experts so consistently bad and, "why do the media and the public keep paying attention to them?" he says.

Gardner locates answers in social psychology and pins our aversion to uncertainty as a core reason why predictions, especially catastrophically

negative ones, continue to thrive.

"Believing that something bad may happen may be more psychologically oppressive than knowing something bad will happen," he says. What's more, predictions which forecast hope and positive change "feel intuitively false because they don't accord with your current circumstances."

While the gut-wrenching anxiety of personal uncertainty plagues our lives, Gardner is eager to avail his readers of the social and political ramifications of the collective delusion of failed predictions. "Expert forecasts are most likely to be accurate when they're least needed and more likely to be inaccurate when they're most needed," he says.

And, what's more, while scientists proclaim the limits of their powers to forecast change in chaotic natural systems, "the experts who talk about social systems haven't adopted this humility," he says. "It's absurd."

Perhaps it's that the media have a vested interest in shielding talk-

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ing heads from the truth. "There is astonishing little accountability of predictions by experts," Gardner laments. "The rule of expert predictions is heads I win, tails you forfeit we had a butt."

Gardner illuminates his point with an economic example, the failed prediction that Japan would surpass the US economy in the 1980s; similar claims are made about China today.

"Just a little bit of memory on the part of the media would make a big difference," he says.



Extraordinary Canadians

BOYDEN AND SAUL CONVERGE FOR A CBC PANEL TALKING ABOUT WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER OUR HISTORY

JOSEPH BOYDEN & JOHN RALSTON SAUL
CBC Centre Stage, Oct. 21 at 2 p.m.

BY BARRY HAMMOND

He's almost like an old black and white photograph that's been left out in the sun. He's fading and fading from history and I hope that's not the case because he's really one of the last true heroes of the Canadian West — a living, breathing example of the old time western hero," says internationally renowned novelist Joseph Boyden about Gabriel Dumont.

Dumont was one of the leading figures in the so-called Northwest Rebellion and is the subject (along with Louis Riel) of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont, one of this fall's entries in the Penguin Books' *Extraordinary Canadians* series of biographies, edited by John Ralston Saul.

Both Saul and Boyden will be in Edmonton Oct. 21 at the CBC Centre Stage at City Centre Mall (102nd Avenue and 100th Street) at noon as part of LitFest. Boyden, author of *Three Day Road* and *Through Black Spruce* will speak about Riel and Dumont and Saul will talk about Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin.

Boyden, who approaches the subject more from a First Nations or Métis angle than have others in the past, also says, "It's the first time anyone's written a major book about the two of them together in the same book. Usually, most of the focus is on Riel — there's not nearly been as much on Dumont but he's just as fascinating a man and really representative of the Métis. They only knew each other in 1884 and 1885 up until Riel's execution."

They spent time together for about a year and a half. Dumont rode down to Montana to ask Riel to come back to Saskatchewan to advance the Métis cause which was, basically, falling on the deaf ears of John A. MacDonald and his government and had been for years. I think there's a lot of misunderstanding about Riel I even read recently in *The National Post* that Michael Ignatieff had said during his bus tour it was time to exonerate Riel and somebody — a sneer reactionary conservative — responded with a lot of false information, so I'm certainly going to talk about some of that as well."

On the recent graphic novel about Riel done by Chester Brown, Boyden says, "I loved it. What an amazing way to introduce a younger, new generation to history in such a fresh way. I think it was brilliant, that book ... and Brown clearly did his research, for sure."



Joseph Boyden joins John Ralston Saul to talk at Edmonton's LitFest. (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

Boyden likes the idea of a non-fiction festival in his own work. He tries to balance both fiction and fact. "They both have their beauties: non-fiction you have pretty tight parameters, you have to stick to the facts. On the one hand, that's a good thing, because it keeps you focused, but, on the other hand, there's that lack of freedom of the fiction writer to, or create, in order to tell a big, big truth."

Boyden loves Edmonton. Besides doing publicity tours here for his two novels, he gave the very first Henry Kreisel memorial lecture (From Muskhengwuk to New Orleans: A Mixed Blood Highway) at the University of Alberta and has a virtual winter-in-residence at Athabasca University.

He says he's also lucky enough to be friends with Kevin Lowe and Karen Percy-Lowe and is involved with their Riverkeeper organization. Asked if there are other extraordinary Canadians he'd like to see featured in the series he says he's glad they're doing one down the road on Rocket Richard, so sports is covered!

He'd also like to see books on General Currie from the First World War and Louis St. Laurent Gord Downie?" he quips of his friend, the front man from The Tragically Hip.

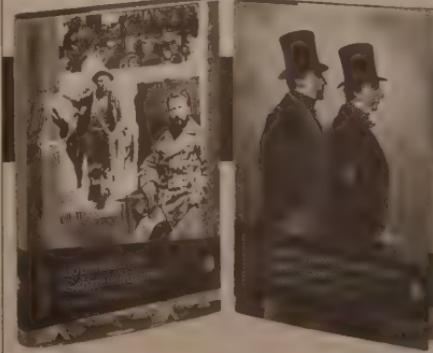
Living part of the year in New Orleans, he's aware of a lot of musical history and recommends the HBO series *Treme*, some of whose writers, actors, and musicians he's also acquainted with.

Boyden admits to being a big amateur music fan and a punk rock kid in the 80s, saying he originally wanted to be a musician, a singer but realized he couldn't sing. However,

toured as a roadie with Bazzooka Joe down in South Carolina with D.O.A.

and The Sub-Humans. Of Downie,

"I get to write his biography. I'm claiming that first. He doesn't know that yet. I'll break it to him gently."



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In Silence, Aerial Shots of the Tar Sands Speak

THE AGA IS SHOWING DOC 'PETROPOLIS' IN CONJUNCTION WITH EDWARD BURTYNSKY 'OIL' PHOTO SERIES

PETROPOULIS

The Art Gallery of Alberta, Oct. 15 at 7 p.m.

BY ALISTAIR HENNING

In conjunction with the exhibition *Edward Burtynsky Oil*, on view at the Art Gallery of Alberta until Jan. 2, the AGA is presenting a screening of the documentary *Petropolis* on Friday, Oct. 15, at 7 p.m.

Commissioned by Greenpeace, award-winning Canadian filmmaker, photographer and artist Peter Mettler, *Petropolis* provides a spectacular new perspective of the oil sands northern Alberta

The film, which was shot almost entirely from a helicopter (it is subtitled *Aerial Perspectives on the Alberta Tar Sands*), takes the viewer on an aerial journey over the boreal forest and adjacent industrial landscape of the oil sands.

Giving a rarely seen look at the industry that drives Alberta's economy seemingly endless and at times devastating, Mettler's creation forces the viewer to consider the apocalyptic beauty of this controversial phenomenon.

Let us forget, the tar sands are the world's second-largest oil reserve, and have purportedly already destroyed a track of boreal forest as big as England.

This documentary, like Burtynsky's *Oil*, bares all razed forests,

tallings ponds black with bitumen, valleys cratered by excavation, the vistas presented are once terrifying and oddly beautiful.

Unfortunately, while films such as *The Book of Eli* and *The Road* employ digital effects and bleached out cinematography to conjure images of

world. And also from commentators including NASA scientists, and of course, director James Cameron (*Titanic, Avatar*).

What's unique about this film is that it is largely wordless; a talking head can be argued with, dismissed, or ignored.

THESE MOVING PICTURES MAY REALLY END UP BEING WORTH A THOUSAND GREENPEACE PROTESTERS

ecological destruction en masse, the devastation shown here is very real.

Visible from orbit, the tar sands couldn't be more visible than they already have been, recently — not only because of the Burtynsky exhibition, but due to increased pressure from environmentalists around the

But it's hard to argue with the vision presented here.

The quietly awesome power of *Petropolis* stems precisely from Mettler's unorthodox but mesmerizing decision to bombard us not with endless facts, but with the sheer visual scope of the project.

In many ways, this approach is analogous to what Burtynsky does with his photos. These, too, are taken in a helicopter which opens up what Burtynsky calls "the middle ground of image making. In them, as here one does not merely survey the horizon, or the ground and so one can see patterns and details that other wise could be invisible."

For the audience, these moving pictures may really end up being worth a thousand Greenpeace protesters.

And what about that sole, concluding voiceover? It relates that Karl Clark, the scientist who discovered the process of separating heavy crude oil from sand, couldn't face revisiting the area once he'd seen the damage his work had caused.



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A Canadian Cinema Great



Maya Lawson, and Katherine E. Scharhon as Chance Hale, look viewers in Guy Maddin's 'Brand upon the Brain!' (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

BEARD'S NEW BOOK OFFERS UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE FILMS OF GUY MADDIN

THE CINEMA OF GUY MADDIN
Kris Therese, Oct. 15 at 7 p.m.

BY MICHAEL NEUMAN

Avant-garde, surrealist, and even experimental filmmakers have all been descriptors of one of Canada's most prolific directors, Guy Maddin.

Yet film studies professor and author William Beard demonstrates that none of these labels prove to be able to convey the unique genius of Maddin's cinematic styles.

In Beard's new book, *Into the Past*, an introspective foray into each of Maddin's films, the Canadian direc-

anyone who has yet to see a Maddin film.

In the likelihood you cannot find a Maddin film at your local Blockbuster, then this book is a perfect surrogate. Every action, thought process, lighting effect and theme is relayed with great detail. In fact there should be a spoiler alert in the introduction. However, I could not imagine anyone unfamiliar with Maddin's cinema to completely read through Beard's opus.

The most interesting and gratifying aspect of Maddin's career is the success and quality of his films despite a shoe-string budget. The avant-garde attitude of all you need is an idea embodied the everyman house painter to grapple with aban-

recognition that Canadian films are important and must be studied. The success of Anglo-Canadian films largely remains in the realm of documentary-realism of the NFB, and Maddin clearly shatters the mould. Beard points out that Maddin often jabs at the difficult state of Canadian filmmaking while lampooning the structure of Hollywood narratives.

Maddin recognizes that both American populist art and European elitist art are phoney, and Beard carefully presents this motivation as an essential driving force in Maddin's films. The quest for the authentic is important to Maddin in a landscape where Canadian directors must either imitate Hollywood blockbusters or adhere to the strict ideals of art-

MADDIN RECOGNIZES THAT BOTH AMERICAN POPULIST ART AND EUROPEAN ELITIST ART ARE PHONEY, AND BEARD CAREFULLY PRESENTS THIS MOTIVATION AS AN ESSENTIAL FORCE IN MADDIN'S FILMS. THE QUEST FOR THE AUTHENTIC IS IMPORTANT TO MADDIN IN A LANDSCAPE WHERE CANADIAN DIRECTORS MUST IMITATE HOLLYWOOD OR ARTHOUSE.

tor's psyche is dissected shot-by-shot. Each distorted pixel, exaggerated facial expression and over-exposed headshot is not only a byproduct of DIY filmmaking but Maddin's compulsion to explore the mythology of forgotten film genres.

But this is not a biography, far too many have been written about Maddin with far too few discrepancies to be of interest. Beard at least leaves room for the birth of a mythic Guy Maddin, conceived by interpreting the director's psyche through his film's narrative. Of course, this could lead to the creation of a madman for

doned film techniques. Beard's bald description of key elements of Maddin incorporates into his productions, ranging from the silent film era to German mountain films, provides a sense that anyone can make a movie. While the name-dropping of obscure films throughout the book is at first annoying, it becomes easy to appreciate Beard's breadth of knowledge when comparing the elements of what defines Maddin's style with other directors.

In many ways the close relationship between Beard and Maddin is not of self-promotion but rather the

house cinema. Much like a biographer, Beard is able to plumb the human facets of his subject that makes *Into the Past* much more than just a cinema studies manual. The exploration of Maddin's relationship with his parents, childhood and city is a focal point for Beard as much as it is for Maddin himself.

Hopefully the low attendance and high walkouts of Maddin's screenings won't be repeated with the Friday, Oct. 15 book launch of *Into the Past*, Kris Therese's *The Cinema of Guy Maddin*.

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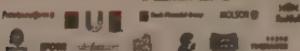
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EDMONTON DESIGN EXPOSED: HOW A DECADE IS

M.A.D.E.

Various venues, Oct. 14-20

BY AMY NEUFELD

It seems to me that asking Shafraaz Kaba, one of the founding members of Media, Art and Design, Exposed (M.A.D.E.) in Edmonton to name some of the events the organization has put on from the past 10 years that stand out to him is a little like asking a parent to pick their favorite child.

It's clear that past speakers have had quite an impact on the architect, and as he begins to name some of his favourites (including Lawrence Scarpa, Scot Loughton, Helen Kerr and Michael Palladino) I can hear the excitement building in his voice as he remembers these events.

We tend to choose designers and architects in our who resonate with and want to hear more from," Kaba explains. "This is our opportunity to make friends with them when they do come because we host them and show them around the city."

Kaba founded M.A.D.E. in 2000 with fellow design enthusiasts Jerry and Karen Derkson, Jay Sylvester and Emily Gordon. "We decided that we needed to resurrect a society that brought architecture and design issues to the public."

The society that Kaba is referring to is the defunct Edmonton Society for Urban and Architectural Studies. "It was this group that inspired me to go to architecture school," he tells me. "At the time I was in engineering and hated it, and the talks they had kept me going."

Upon returning to Edmonton after completing his architectural studies, Kaba realized that the society had been dissolved, and the organization was too important to lose. "This time we decided to open it up to design in general and public art, and the elements that affect design in

our cities."

M.A.D.E. has now been going strong for 10 years, and the group is marking this milestone with their most extensive event to date. Edmonton Design Exposed (EDE) How a Decade is M.A.D.E. is a 10-day celebration featuring lectures, exhibits, film screenings, panels and parties at various locations throughout the city.

It's pretty much a festival this year," Kaba says proudly. "We're hosting a 10-day festival of design. We've never done such a long and ongoing event before."

And the kick-off to this extravaganza will be the opening gala and retrospective exhibit at the Art Gallery of Alberta on Thursday, Oct. 14 from 8:30-10:30 p.m. Admission is free, and the event will provide a display of past events and lectures.

"For the design and architectural elements we have images and even some pieces to showcase our past," Kaba explains.

And how do you display a lecture that happened years ago? "We've asked past lecturers to comment on their memories from when they spoke in the city, and some of the responses are about how Edmonton has inspired them in their own work."

When I ask Kaba what some of the highlights of this year's event will be, it appears I've stumbled once again into impossible decision making territory as his enthusiasm for the entire program bubbles over.

"We're bringing in some world renowned architects and designers," he tells me excitedly. "For example we're going to have Edouard Francois from France talk about his work. He does large urban scale design that's really quite cool."

"We've also got Todd Chernowinsky the guy behind the graphics in *Avatar* and *Alice in Wonderland*. He's from Edmonton and is now on the world stage working on these films."

At this year's event, Kaba hopes that the group will be able to expose the importance of public art in the city. "We want to showcase our own



Volunteers work on a M.A.D.E. project in Churchill Square. (PHOTOS SUPPLIED)

designers," he says. "There's quite more public art being proposed and created in our city because of the one per cent public art policy. We'd like to showcase how that public art which some people complain is waste of money, actually contributes to quality of life and makes our communities memorable and authentic."

So what does the design future of Edmonton look like to Shafraaz Kaba personally and as an architect? "I think Edmonton needs to rein in sprawl. Cities that contain themselves create density, and that creates life and energy and opportunity. There need to be future development plans along these lines; the city is starting to understand Urban density will allow us to thrive in the future rather than stagnate and deteriorate."

And with the upcoming elections does this future seem possible? "I have to credit Don Iveson for pushing sustainability issues," Kaba tells me.

"He's pushed to look into food security and public transit which are so important for any community. He's made me very optimistic about our city."



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Irrelevant In E-Town Again

CBC COMEDY PROGRAM IS A
RADIO FAVORITE

THE IRRELEVANT SHOW
Myer Horowitz Theatre Oct. 22

BY SEAN JOYNER

For seven years, the multiple award-winning *Irrelevant Show* has built itself into many CBC listeners' regular schedules. The sketch comedy show features local talent and original material that provides a humorous alternative to most CBC programming. With a weekly broadcast on both CBC One and Sirius Satellite Radio, *The Irrelevant Show* is now more accessible than it's ever been. And on Oct. 22 the show will be recording the final few tapings of its 16-episode season in front of live audiences at the Myer Horowitz Theatre.

Led by head writer Neil Grahn and under the close watch of producer Peter Brown, *The Irrelevant Show* has maintained its mission of promoting Canadian comedy, and focuses heavily on Edmonton writers and performers. From the show's inception as an accessory to CBC's *Definitely Not the Opera* in 2003, *The Irrelevant Show* was meant to showcase Canada's thick comedy roots both locally and internationally. That was the first incarnation of it," Grahn recalls. Though, "I wasn't actually on that one, so this one is far superior, according to me. I don't know where Peter sits on that, but this is my interview."

Grahn says basing the show out of Edmonton may have hindered it slightly — it's tough to compete with Toronto's money and population or Vancouver's arts scene. But thanks to the cast, writers and supporting economy, *The Irrelevant Show* is en-

joying both local success and Canada-wide recognition.

"Maybe we're just stubborn and stupid, but the talents definitely here," he says. "No ones getting rich, but we're remaking b-movie shows and nobody gets into this business to get rich, anyway." And at a time when many performing arts are struggling, it seems as if comedy has experienced a recent resurgence in popularity. From the number of comedians developing TV shows to recent comedy success stories in movie theatres, humour seems to remain one of our culture's staples.

"Comedy never really gets a lot of respect, but it always gets burns in seats," Grahn points out. "Nobody wins Academy Awards or Grammys, but people watch it — people want to see it." Grahn says that comedy and the box office are constants in our world of entertainment. And like many other art commodities, it rides a wave of popularity set by the economy. When times are good, we watch a comedy to celebrate. When they're bad, we gravitate towards comedy as a form of escapism. "People always want to laugh," he says. "It's one of the releases that's completely socially acceptable, and totally makes you feel better afterwards. And, like a comic, you can feel really ripped off at both events, too. If you go to a shitty comedy show, you go that sucked. I lost my money."

Despite its often underappreciated nature, Grahn says the live tapings of *The Irrelevant Show* make all of the labours — the writing process and the table reads — worthwhile. "With comedy, you're playing the percentages," he says. "If you go to a sketch comedy show and you find 90 per cent of the scenes funny, holy crap.



The Irrelevant Show will open its red laser beams in Edmonton Oct. 18. (PHOTO: SUPPLIED)

Sketch comedy — especially performed in front of a live audience for radio — is a rare find, and Grahn says he's just thankful that CTV was willing to provide the support that the show needs in order for it to continue.

And while the awards and critical approval are a plus, acceptance from the audience and his peers are what really make shows like *The Irrelevant Show* worthwhile for Grahn. "There's so much smoke blown up your ass in this business," he admits. "You meet so many people who say, 'You guys are great, we're going to do something with you guys for sure, we love you, but they don't call back.' A lot of the time, people are really positive. But really the love is when they hire you and give you money to make your show. Nothing beats that."

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PUNK • PREVIEW

It's All Uphill From Here

THE TRANSMITORS ARE GROWING OLD, BUT KEEPING IT REAL - EVEN IF THEY REALLY LIKE SEWING

THE TRANSMITORS

With The Frowowers, Slates, and Nervous Week
Avonmore Hall (7902 - 73 Ave)
Saturday, Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets: At the door (\$10 ages)

BY ROBIN SCHROFFEL

Aging can be a sensitive issue for punk bands, but the Transmitors have come up with a 45-rpm solution

You really have to capitalize on the single format that allows you to not feel obligated to stick your picture on the cover," says guitarist and vocalist Jeffrey McCloy. "We're not getting any younger, there's not that much more time that we're gonna be able to take photos of our faces and not have people think we're creepy old people."

The Vancouver band has been immortalized on 7" records by record labels Dritina, Meaty Beaty, Deranged, Ugly Pop, La Wa Da, and Seeing Eye, with four more singles out before Christmas two of which are available now. They band isn't exactly showing signs of slowing, even if growing older was a primary factor in the recent departure of Jarrod O'Dell.

"We knew like a year ago that when I turned 30 that he and his wife were going to start a family," says McCloy. "We knew there was a clock ticking with that guy and it was fine, certainly not nasty at all. And he seems to show up at shows all the time and just sort of wander on stage and do things as well."

Although McCloy says the shrinking lineup hasn't affected the Transmitors sound ("It was a guitar band



The Transmitors play Avonmore Hall on Saturday. I PHOTO SUPPLIED

before he joined and it still is," he says) he says that it's made for a jar ring aesthetic change that the band still hasn't come to terms with.

"If you were to look at the band in a silhouette sort of situation, it's very uncomfortable," McCloy deadpans. "Mike's unusually tall and has those big glasses, I'm basically like a midget, and Nick, he's got a man body, so now the front of the stage looks disproportionate because I was boxed in between these two lanky creatures and therefore that allowed Nick's manly body to be equalized out because you had vertical and then width and then half-pint."

The Transmitors may not pay bills through music but that doesn't mean music isn't a full-time life choice. McCloy manages to weave a tale of his punk past into a path to his present occupation as a tailor, apprenticeship to craft suits entirely by hand

"I got so good at sewing with dental floss, sewing punk patches, and I really wanted to take it to the next level. There's only so many bum flaps you can put together. And I was sewing bum flaps with invisible stitches. I was doing all kinds of fun stuff, he says. "The best part though, suddenly have bum flaps naturally built in them. My favorite cut for a suit was a bum flap. So it has gone full circle."

But McCloy is a bit of a traditionalist when it comes to fashion:

"I don't ever want to sew a patch on a suit. I've seen people do that before and it makes you throw up in your mouth. Understand that you should break lots of rules but some of them are there for a reason. One of them, don't sew punk patches on bum flaps of suits," he says. "That's what happens when you transition from crust to mod in one swift move."

TIME • THE USE

Time Is Of The Essence



Willie F. • www.riotactivedia.com
RAISE SOME TIME FOR
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IN EDMONTON. SPENT SOME
TIME IN EDMONTON.

Before we get deep into our session of "Information Nuggets" today, let me quickly push the second annual Timeraiser event into your busy consciousness. Unfamiliar? It's the art auction where the goal isn't to raise money, but 4,000 hours of volunteer

work which you then bid on and get the (additional) reward of some pretty work by a local artist. These include Bablopop, Omotoso, Sean Borchart, Sergio Serrano and others (myself included). Various community organizations will be set up at the Old Strathcona Arts Barns where this takes place Saturday, Oct. 16 ■ 7 p.m., which means even if you don't want to bid on the art you can get involved with building our local civilization and pledge a few hours to them in the spirit of Thanksgiving, Christmas or whatever moves you to be an appreciated and helpful part of the city. Tickets are \$10, which also helps.

Everything you need to know is at timeraiser.ca, including the gallery of work, and the powerfully fun high-

end karaoke of Amy Van Keekon's Rock and Roll Singalong hits the stage at 10, the best roving dance party going these days (AVK's also DJing at Wunderbar Wednesdays). If you've been feeling like getting involved with the world, # basically couldn't be easier than this.

The ever-successful Hot Pands is challenging ardent sculptors to remake their lead single "Mindlessnessness" from the fresh and bouncy *How Come I'm Dead?* album, which came out this week. www.riotactivedia.com/mp3/mindlessnessness.mp3 is where you need to click to hear the song, and don't tell me you don't know how to download music from the Internet. Here are the component stems as well: www.mintrecs.com

TIME cont'd on p.20

He Is Juggernaut

COHEED AND CAMBRIA ALLOW THE DRUMMER THAT WOULD A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE MANY GENRES

COHEED AND CAMBRIA

With Finch Island
Edmonton Event Center (WEM)
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BY CURTIS WRIGHT

There's a joke that goes something like this:

What's the last thing a drummer says in a band?

"Hey guys, why don't we try one of my songs?"

Maybe if more bands listened to that lonely drummer, they might be on to something. At least it was Coheed and Cambria's drummer — he thinks about music. I'm actually pretty sure that's all he thinks about.

"Other than the drumming thing, I write a lot and there are various other projects I do," says Coheed's drummer, Chris Pennie, as he talks endlessly about his adoration for DJ Shadow, a bit of a surprise considering his musical history.

"There is a lot of stuff that I had written during Dilinger Escape Plan and now it's sort of coming to fruition — you know, I have some downtime between tours with Coheed. I have a production company that I do with a friend of mine — Fight Mannequins — some of it is orchestral; some of it's like trip hop and ambient; it runs across a lot of different genres."

Pennie, the most recent addition to New York's experimental sci-fi rockers, Coheed and Cambria, joined the group in 2007 after co-founding the



Coheed and Cambria do the classic rock pose — disappointing for sci-fi fans. (PHOTO: AP/WIDEWORLD)

highly technical mathcore elite in The Dilinger Escape Plan. However, due to personal difficulties and legal complications — including legal threats from Dillinger's label, Relapse Records — at first it was difficult for Pennie to find himself behind the kit in Coheed.

"Looking back it was an awful really stressful time and a lot of personal relationships were really strained. I am glad things changed and I am happy where I am at — it's been nothing but up from there," says Pennie. "I feel like I am more part of the family with Coheed than I did with Dilinger in those last couple years and that kind of sad because Ben and I were kind of the founding members of that band and it just grew apart."

Hearing Pennie speak about those moments, you can hear a strain in his voice and the noticeable excitement with his new terrain. The discomfort of this time with Dilinger, and the transition that ensued, has allowed Pennie to focus on his passion and re-develop the relationships with his favourite things: music and his band.

I have always been into music. There were always things that I wanted to get into and wanted to try. It always takes time to get there," says Pennie, lamenting on his days with Dilinger. "My big thing is: Okay, I've been a part of two successful bands and have accomplished a lot in the music world, but for me there's something else I want to accomplish, not only drumming, but there's writing and composing and that sort of thing — that's important to me."

Coheed and Cambria have allowed Pennie to explore different sounds and ideas within the band (notably latin and jazz, which Pennie talks up), while allowing an opportunity to draw his passion outside of his new family.

"I enjoy the time with Coheed, the guys in the band and I love touring with them," Pennie says. "But when we're home I don't just sit at home — there's always something I'm working on. Music is on my mind 24/7. Last night I woke up at 5 a.m. and couldn't go back to bed because I was thinking of creative ideas. I just love it. I love it so much. It's so important to me."

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JOHN LENNON

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

John Lennon was clearly kind of dink, like any artist. You can hear audio proof of this during recording sessions, and he obviously did and said whatever he liked, kind of a refreshing break at the time. Even his song "Gimme Some Truth" pretty much rags on anyone with short hair, which, aha! not everyone can help. But as a society we've extracted Lennon's sweetest urges — from "Imagine" to "Woman" to "Happy Christmas" — as being the Representative Lennon, a well-meaning hippy who wants everyone to get along. Why I like this compilation is twofold. First, it starts with another call for revolution; this one over low wages, in a kind of sloppy gospel song re-invented on its own saxophone. It then turns into "Truth"; where again, Lennon takes issue with people's haircuts, but both songs are meat and potatoes, and emerge from an appropriate anger over issues that haven't been solved in the slightest since they were recorded decades ago, and probably never will be.

The other thing I love is the remastering, done by the same nerds who worked the Beatles so well recently, bringing out Ringo Starr as the genius some always knew he was. As with those recordings, you could generally say the other musicians get more of the spotlight and that this music has never sounded so clean. The ambient hum in the back of "Anxious Guy," for example, really jumps out now, while an already crisp song like "We're All Over" sounds extra Christmassy, the strings and Yoko leaping out, the children's chorus moving back. If feels more intimate, less Celine Dion, which you may or may not like. The Lennon mega-box, by the way, has done this cleanup to all his major recordings, and I'm happily working through it now. This



greatest hits preview has certainly inspired me to do so.

★★★★★

KINGSWAY & THE GREAT OUTDOORS

THE BELIEVEABLE HALF COURT

Trying to untangle the strings of Kingsway, Counterevolutionaries, The Great Outdoors and the shifting and affiliated musician population of east Vancouver isn't

nearly as important as applying them one and all for making music in that tricky city. Japanese-cluster style RC Joseph is a talented man taking advantage of every opportunity possible: from writing lyrics which perfectly capture Vancouver's weight on an artist in every song to supporting his scene as a music critic. He can also draw a really mean Garfield, which is a story I'd tell you some other time.

The impression I get, perhaps too subjectively, is these songs are pushed down upon, yet persistent with lines like "Hope's good even when it falters." It's an album about city dwellers dealing with form letters about death, nosy cops, and, over and over, about the difficulties of living in a place

where commerce and development are constantly doing everything they can, even if unconsciously, to extinguish emergent and underground creativity. The music is a definitely sung near-falsetto folkpopcountry which Vancouver picked up on late but has not only fiercely defended as a form of more interesting modern blues, but in doing so made it something of its own. Steve Lowe down in Nanton is a fucking great producer, which you can especially hear on the Great Outdoors Live at the Auditorium Hotel CD which is sister to this.

Like all genuine things of any interest, pain-inspired I like. I like.

★★★★★

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CD • REVIEWS



DEERHUNTER

Halcyon Digest

(Nones)

★★★★★

Bradford Cox doesn't ever really stop working. Fortunately. While constantly releasing material through solo project Atlas Sound, Cox managed to squeeze out a Deerhunter album of unparalleled calibre. Like its predecessors, *Halcyon Digest* parts ambient dreamscapes held together by Cox's fuzzy, rebusious vocals. Yet, the album twists and frolics about its aural domain, jumping from euphoria to nightmare effortlessly. "Memory Boy" opens with sun-soaked chords, but miraculously clears halfway to reveal a sotster driving beat running parallel to Cox's psychotic incantations. The beautifully unpresumptuous opening riff in "Conrado"

will give you chills long before the surprise sax entry obliterates any lingering scraps of preconceived notions. A personal favourite is "Rewind," which utilizes jangly guitars to make religious praise sound unusually innovative; I thank the Lord for Deerhunter's casual effervescence. From Cox's own madcap fountain of creativity springs forth *Halcyon Digest*, arguably one of this year's definitive albums.

CHRIS LIU



WINTER GLOVES

All Red

(Pop Rap)

★★★★★

Marching to the beat of their own Wurlitzer, Montreal's Winter Gloves return with their sophomore album *All Red*. Drawing influences from their Canadian synth pop brethren (most notably Tokyo Police Club and Stars), their second album features a more diverse offering than 2009's *About a Girl*: Beck-worship (Hansen not Glenn) fuels the leadoff track "Glow in The Dark," a guitar heavy romp punctuated by electro beats and lead singer Charles Fiterman's nasal vocal. "Strange Love" come across as like a lo-fi disco track, with its soft buzzy vocals accompanying a low dance beat that drops like aerial confetti. The album wraps up on the track "Ending Soon," a low tone send-off that sounds a bit like it could be a 16 bit video game soundtrack. *All Red* is a sign that the Winter Gloves studio work is starting to match the energetic fire of their live show, signs of more versatile things to come and a solid album that deserves your attention.

ANDY COOKSON



THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Original Soundtrack

(Pluto)

★★★★★

It's interesting that the soundtrack to the much-hyped, even more regarded Facebook movie, *The Social Network*, could never be the soundtrack to the actual social media machine. Yet, it would be difficult to properly score super-awesome songs that fit boys being-cong, girls being-way-too-posey, and good looking people looking super reflective — you know the kind as if the camera's not there. Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross (compose/NIN producer) have created a score for Facebook's dystopia — a recording for the darker, more oppressive side of the social giant — perhaps an audio snapshot of what most profile photos would and should never look like. Similar to HIN's *Ghosts I-IV* in its cold and lingering simplicity, this score plays a major part in the development and plot of the movie, rather than being a relentless accessory. The movie's cold, impatient drama enhanced by its well thought out, astounding instrumental score. Enhance your own Facebook experience — listen to this while creating your next status update, people will ask if you're doing okay in life.

CURTIS WRIGHT



THE BEATDOWN

S/T

(Domp)

★★★★★

These are keeners, and there are overachievers, and then there's the Marsalis family. Nothing quite says "keeping it all in the family" like *Music Redemeers*. The live recording of jazz standards features six of the esteemed Marsalis clan. They've got it covered, from piano to percussion and a full brass section. If I could play any piano half as well as Jason Marsalis can whistle, I'd be set. Classics like "Tea" and "Monkey Puzzle" are interspersed with the Marsalis brothers recollecting on family road trips. Harry Connick Jr. makes a guest appearance and chats about childhood music lessons at the Marsalis household. This superb recording captures all the rich vibes of the live performance, making for a cheap ticket in the best show you've missed. I won't lie, I was dancing around my kitchen by the end.

BRIAN J. KNIGHT



TRICKY

Mixed Race

(Bonne)

★★★★★

According to those who even feign interest anymore, Tricky still can't do anything right. In the spiritual hip-hop of bashed for having come up with one of the decade's most singular sounds, a darkly spectral hip-hop of muffled late-night bumps and post-orgasmic ghetto arias. Trying new sounds and genres in the '00s, he was pillowed for not sticking to what he did best. And yet every album is, to some, however tentatively, a comeback, which brings us to *Mixed Race*. Subscribing to the "all killer no filler" school of composition, a couple of the songs clock in around two and a half minutes. And if you've never heard a Tricky album before, you're likely to be impressed by this disk regardless of whether you're familiar with his illustriously tempestuous past. So it's not a comeback, then — just another record from one of the most singular and wayward talents of our time.

ALISTAIR HENNING

Holiday In Guantanamo



Jello, wipe that smirk off your face and do whatever it is you're supposed to do with those latex gloves. | PHOTO: ELIZABETH MCGOWAN

INSPIRED BY AN IGGY POP GIG, JELLO BIAFRA'S LOVE OF MUSIC HAS AWAKENED — AND IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK

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BY ALISTAIR HENNING

Jello Biafra should need little introduction: serious punk fans from 1977 to 1986, in Jello's original band, The Dead Kennedys, his deliberately shocking lyrics sarcastically satirized life under the Reagan administration, over top of music which fused experimental British punk with energetic American hardcore.

But since that band ended, Jello has mostly been floating between significant but spotty (as short-lived, not acne-prone!) side projects with the likes of Al Jourgenson (Ministry) and The Melvins, working on his label, Alternative Tentacles, and trying out the odd presidential race (he finished second to Ralph Nader in a campaign for nomination as presidential candidate for the Green Party in 2000).

Recently inspired by Iggy Pop's 60th birthday gig at the Warfield in San Francisco, Biafra decided it was time to come out of musical semi-retirement.

Reviving an idea from a decade ago to work with guitarist Ralph Spight (Victims Family, Freak Accident, Hellworms) and drummer Jon Weiss

(Sharkbait Horsey), Biafra brought bassist Billy Gould (Faith No More) on board again. Following a month's rehearsals and some encouraging performances in San Francisco, the four-piece band (at that time known as Jello Biafra and the Axis Of Merriment) spent the next nine months in rehearsal for an album, now joined by guitarist Kimie Ball (Freak Accident, Carnivale Johnnies, Mo Trifid, Griddle).

Renamed Jello Biafra and The Guantanomo School Of Medicine, the quintet recorded tracks for The Audacity Of Hype, produced by Biafra and engineered by Matt Kelley (Hieroglyphics, Tupac Digital Underground, Victim Family) at Prairie Sun Recording in Costa, Calif., and San Francisco's Hyde Street Studios.

According to guitarist Ralph Spight, the song writing process was unique for the Audacity because "Jello had a lot of ideas already stored away in his head. He pretty much knew what was going on down to ideas for solos and ideas for different melodies that would come through. He had everything composed in his head already, and needed assistance getting it from his mind to an instrument. He doesn't play any instruments, so he would hum a part to me and I'd figure out what key it's in. The guys really a compositional genius. The things he's written are really intricate."

The musical influences of Biafra's latest project is more eclectic than a Dead Kennedys fan might think: "I think we're all really influenced by the Batman TV show! Punk and

hardcore, surf and psychedelia to use really broad terms," Spight says. "There are a lot of influences in Jello's music that people don't really know, like his love of psychedelic music. It really shocks people. And I think it's a little more prevalent in this material compared to Dead Kennedys. I think it's a lot of Biafra's best work in a really long time."

Jello Biafra and the Guantanomo School Of Medicine challenging audiences with their newly found eclectic offerings, are mindful that they are not simply a legendary punk cover act.

With these songs, he's back to doing more concise statements about political things. Spight says "Back to the humour of the early Dead Kennedys material but with an even heavier musical approach."

It has that spy music on speed thing, but there's also this heavier MCS vibe going on... I think a lot of people come expecting a DKs tribute band, and when they find out that there's a bunch of new songs that totally rock and there's going to be a few OKs songs, they're pretty happy. I really think this music has always been about keeping it fresh, and if you're not, it's just pointless."

Asked about the resurgence in protest music in recent years and how this album fits in with that, Spight concludes:

"Albums like this are important anytime. The message we're bringing right now, which is timeless, is don't go to sleep! Keep getting on your governments' about things that are going on. Don't become passive. Don't devolve into a Facebook page."

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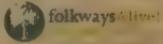
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BY JOSH MARCELLIN

World-class violinist Matt Glaser has a knowledge of roots music that is borderline encyclopedic.

"I'm not crazy about that term [roots music]," Glaser explains. "I prefer to talk all these other styles that make up roots music: classic country music including old-time, bluegrass, western swing, various forms of Celtic folk music, acoustic blues, all kinds of black music that predates soul and rhythm and blues, Cajun music; polka; klezmer. That's how I define roots music, as being a heading under which to put all those styles."

Glaser recently became the artistic director of the new American Roots program at the Berklee College of Music in Boston after 29 years as chair of their string department. Fluent in both jazz and roots styles, Glaser will be sharing his wealth of musical knowledge at the University of Alberta through talks and performances.

Joining him in concert will be the No-Longer Strangers, which include local jazz pianist Wayne Feschuk, as well as Daniel Gervais, Clint Pellerin, and Travis Switzer from gypsy-jazz ensemble Hot Club Edmonton.

Although he hasn't met many of the musicians he'll be performing,



Matt Glaser, his violin and a couch. (Clearly his next Facebook profile picture.) PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ing with in Edmonton, Glaser said that sometimes the most rewarding shows are the ones you'd least expect to be great.

"For me some of the most gratifying gigs are with not particularly famous musicians, and not in a particularly large club, before a not particularly large audience," Glaser says.

"Where just the music went to a beautiful place and I played as well as I could, and I felt a connection to the emotional well-springs in the music, and I was able to respond to that and respond to that with the other musicians and share that with the audience."

Over the years Glaser has been invited to play with some towering musical figures, either with his own group, the Wayfaring Strangers, or as a special guest. He's shared stages with some of the biggest names in jazz, classical, and folk - Bob Dylan, Lee Konitz, Ralph Stanley, Yo-Yo Ma, and the list goes on.

"Yo-Yo Ma and I played together as part of Stephen Grappelli's 80th birthday party at Carnegie Hall, and we all played this song 'Tiger Rag,' which is a very fast old jazz tune. And as we were all bowing, I was bowing

next to Yo-Yo Ma, and he said to me that 'I was lost.' I didn't know where the fuck I was," Glaser laughs.

Presented by the University of Alberta's *folkwaysAlive!* program, an initiative aimed at preserving and promoting traditional music styles, Glaser will be hosting fiddle master classes, ethnomusicology lunches, and lectures on campus. In addition to the concert on Friday, Glaser will be at Convocation Hall (2-2:50 p.m.) to talk about the roots of American popular music.

It's a free public lecture, one that Glaser said he hopes as many people as possible will attend.

"I like to be like an itinerant musician slash teacher and kind of an evangelist for the things that I like," he says. "So at this public lecture to this large class, I'll be playing from my computer amazing performances, links from YouTube, from recordings I have on my iPod of incredible music demonstrating all these styles. It's like an old impulse I had when I was a kid. I'd have friends over to the house and say, 'Hey, check this out, hear this to this, isn't that great?' That's still a very motivating factor for me as a musician, to share music with people."

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Fubar II

Starring: Michael Rapaport, David Koechner, Steve Carell
Directed by: Mike Judge
Written by: Mike Judge
Produced by: Mike Judge
Cinematography: Michael E. Morris
Edited by: Michael E. Morris
Music by: Michael E. Morris
Costume Design: Michael E. Morris
Production Design: Michael E. Morris
Visual Effects: Michael E. Morris
Sound混音: Michael E. Morris
Production Office: Michael E. Morris
Post-Production: Michael E. Morris
Distributed by: Michael E. Morris
Rated: PG-13

Force Of Nature

NIGHTLY 8PM / SAT & SUN 9PM
MARINEERS vs. 2:00 PM
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CATFISH

NIGHTLY 8PM / SAT & SUN 11AM
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IT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY



Los Angeles Times
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access*

ZACH GALIFIANAKIS IS A REVELATION!
Charming, moving and well-acted.
SCOTT MASTZ



Sometimes what's in your head isn't as crazy as you think.

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High Achiever Flies Over The Cuckoo's Nest

WHIMSICAL, HEARTWARMING,
A LITTLE BLAND, AND NOT
VERY FUNNY – ALL BETTER
ADJECTIVES FOR THIS 'STORY'

IT'S A FUNNY KIND OF STORY

Opens Oct. 15

★★★½

BY ALISTAIR HENNING

Pretty much every review I've read of *It's A Funny Kind of Story* references that other great movie set in a mental institution, *Miles Formans One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. And certainly, compared to that seminal institutional drama, this *Story* could well be described as *Cuckoo Lite*.

But it that would not be entirely fair. For one thing, this *Story* is the drama of a much younger man – 16-year-old Craig (Keir Gilchrist) – who, in the opening voice-over, informs us that he has been having vivid dreams of killing himself.

And so the tone of this movie, which living up to its title is kind of funny but not very, is set adolescent earnestness filtered through mild whimsy, reassuring us as even so-called American indie flicks seemning nowadays, that even though bad things could happen in situations like this, they certainly will not



Zach Galifianakis (right) steals the show as Bobby, who befriends Craig (Keir Gilchrist) in hospital. [SUPPLIED]

in this fictional safe space.

Which brings me to my central criticism of this film. While, arguably, vintage films like *Cuckoo's Nest* or Sam Fuller's *Shock Corridor* go overboard in representing mental wards/institutions as places of over-size suffering if not outright evil, this *Story* is ultimately bland in its impersonism to really capture the experiences portrayed in an appreciably resonant way.

Written: Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck (*Half Nelson*, *Sugar*) do a pretty good job with the slightly feistier (or so I hear) novel by Ned Vizzini. And Zach Galifianakis shines as the gregarious Bobby, who Craig befriends and who's open about everything except why he's there.

Galifianakis is seemingly everywhere these days, but in this role he gets to flex the dramatic muscles some of us have sensed lay some-

where beneath all that comic blab. Whether delivering wise advice or violently acting out, Galifianakis is highly believable, and transfixing, in this role.

Also standout in what could have been a very shallow part is Emma Roberts, who plays Noelle, Craig's love interest. There's a quirky naturalness about her performance which makes us accept that she may have problems with self-harm (cutting),

but more importantly she's a feisty and intelligent young woman.

Craig's parents (Lauren Graham, Jim Gaffigan) fare less well in rounding out their characters. They seem supportive, but a little mystified as to what landed their son in his current predicament, and that's about it.

The performances pretty much go downhill after that, with Craig's infatuation object Nia (Zoe Kravitz), who is the girlfriend of his best friend, Aaron (Thomas Mann), both essentially warmly drawn characters.

Like the recent critical success *The Kids Are All Right*, *It's A Funny Kind of Story* makes us care surprisingly much about the relatively minor tribulations of white upper middle class Americans.

It was a testament to the skill of the team behind *Kids*, and of this movie also, to elicit broad empathy for folks who, compared to most North Americans, start (and end) with pretty much everything most of us expect or desire.

It's hard not to recommend *It's A Funny Kind of Story* just as emphatically as that earlier comedy of privilege, though. Love life's truly universal theme; teenage angst is best left to angsty, and ideally actual, teenagers.

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STARTS FRIDAY GARNEAU

CHECK THEATRE DIRECTORY FOR SHOWTIMES

A Different World With A Different Sound



BY G.H. LEWMER
**DOCUMENTARY CHARTS
THE 1970S RISE OF GERMAN
ELECTRONIC MUSIC**

To place context, and to unify disparate parts into a cohesive whole are two of the most important elements of a great nonfiction film. Due to the pivotal role the archivist plays in this process, this figure is now becoming

ing rightfully recognized as a key participant in defining and shaping cultural understanding. It's clear, watching the superlative documentary *Krautrock*, that a master archivist was at work here.

This BBC 4 Production (produced and directed by Ben Whalley) undertakes the daunting task of imposing historical order on a genre of music (Krautrock), which is essentially German electronic-inflected rock music from 1968-1975 that has largely flown under the radar of popular consciousness. What's so gratifying about this documentary is how Whalley makes an informative and entertaining film from such difficult

and elusive subject matter.

To the uninformed, Krautrock is certainly not the easiest music to listen to. Bands such as Armon Dauell, Cluster Neu, Can and Faust (all in turn featured in the film) were ground breakers by being uniquely creative individual entities that, when taken as a collective, started a movement that was an important influence on all of popular music to follow.

What we learn indirectly through out the film is that is few of the bands socialized with one another and that they were all subconsciously responding to a need to create a new music that was neither American or British nor German. What producer/director Whalley is able to mi-

raculously accomplish through these interviews with various band members is the location of the thread of unpremeditated synchronicity that runs throughout these groups and individuals, which assists the neo-physics viewer to recognize, clarify and understand this important music to movement.

The majority of the documentary concentrates on the two most commercially successful bands, Tangerine Dream and Kraftwerk. Instead of focusing in on why these bands were successful, the participants (Edgar Froese and Ralf Haufer) explore the reasons why this music was made and why a new German music made by nonmusicians was important and

necessary to the German people. The accumulation of thoughts such as these and the recorded accomplishments by all the integrally driven musicians interviewed, helps Whalley to easily locate the center of the piece.

Many of the clips presented of the bands in concert during their heyday are mesmerizing and have never been seen before. Great art is usually way ahead of its time and it's extremely rare for a film to take visionary material and ground it for all to behold. *Krautrock: The Rebirth of Germany* is a film that both inspires and informs and is a must see for anyone interested in great music or great cinema.

SHOWTIMES October 14 – October 14, 2010

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870-915EST 10/14 7:30-8:30-9:30-10:30

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2:00pm

PRINCESS

1031-1045EST 10/14 8:30-9:30-10:30

9:30pm to 10:30pm Sat & Sunday matines 8:10pm

*language may offend

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matinees 8:30pm to 9:30pm

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Liftest ALBERTA
ENCORE Legacy Magazine was a lovely magazine that helped shine a beautiful light on the province we call home. Now the magazine has turned into an equally as beautiful online table book. Stanley A. Miller Library Theatre, 7 p.m.

OCTOBER 18

electropop | LIGHTS
Not too many girls can pull off legally changing their name to an inanimate object, but our girl Lights did. Her name may be strange, but her voice is nothing but sheer bliss! Edmonton Event Centre, 7 p.m.

OCTOBER 19

country | SPRAWLING FROM GRACE, DRIVEN TO MADNESS Join other like-minded design nerds and join the 10th year celebration of M.A.D.E. In Edmonton, tonight's film covers the consequences of suburban sprawl. Metro Cinema, 9 p.m.

OCTOBER 20

2000 2000 | BABY HEROES DIAPER DRIVE
If you've got yourself a baby but no diapers, you've got yourself into a poopy situation. Help fight the smell and donate a pack of diapers. Kingsway Garden Mall, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.

thursday**OCTOBER 14**

RUDIE + NITTY GRITY DIRTY BAND Grab your spoons, polish off your legs and get ready for a jam session like you've never seen before! Edmonton Event Centre, 8 p.m.

friday

OCTOBER 15
ex + TABOO NAUGHTY...
BUT NICE SHOW! The weather is starting to get chilly and in Edmonton the only plus side to that awful truth is the increase in cuddle time! Learn something new or buy something interesting. Northlands Agiplex, 8 p.m.

saturday

OCTOBER 16
plunger | EDMONTON
TIMERAISER We know that it's hard to give money to a charity when you feel like a charity user yourself, but here is your chance to help a good cause without breaking the bank! Transcend Arts Barn, 7 p.m.

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Thursday Oct 14

Live Music

ACCENT EVERGREEN LOUNGE - Slack Key Slim with Luuens Henderickx (Tues) - 9 PM - COVER

BLUES CHAT - Blues Chat, Thursday Night Jazz Inst. Brett Miles (Thurs) - 7-9 PM - \$10 - NO COVER

BLUES ON WHITE - The Immortal Blues (Tues) - 9PM+

CAFE HAVEN - Demi Text (Frid) - 7PM -

CAFE LEVY - Barry Martyns and Tatjan Reeves (Blues) - 8 PM -

EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE - Nutty Gertie Band (Blues) - 8 PM - NO COVER

EDMONTON, SERVICE CHARITIES MAY APPLY, CHECK WEBSITE FOR TIX

HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB - See Burns and Gentry (Country) - 7:30 PM - \$10 - AT THE DOOR

JEFFREY'S CAFE & WINE BAR - Alan Gray (Folk) - 8 PM -

JOE'S - STAY AT THE DOOR

KINSHIP - Linda McLean - Jam Session & Dance (Inst. Wind) - 8 PM - \$10 - NO COVER

MEREDITH HOBSON - Hobson's DownTown - Devine Harvey (Country) - 8 PM - NO COVER

TAPHOUSE - Sits with Take With Audio (Alt, Rock) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

THE BEEHIVE COFFEE AND BAR - Hoffman & Brown (Country & Rock) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

THE REST IS NAIT - The Rest is with Royal Canoe (Folk, Rock) - 8-9:30 PM - NO COVER

WUNDERBAR - Al Johnson with The Magnificent Seven (Alt, Folk) - 9:30 PM -

YARDSTICK SUITE - Loraine Desmarais (Inst. 25th Anniversary Tour) - Loraine Desmarais (Inst) - 9 PM - \$20 MEMBERS, \$24 NON-MEMBERS, CHECK WEBSITE FOR TIX

Djs/Club Nights

BUDGY'S PUB - DJ (House) (Wed) - 9 PM - NO COVER

FLUO LOUNGE - Party in Crime (Dj) - 9:30 PM - NO COVER

THE COMMON - So Necessary (Bass, Dubstep) - 9 PM -

BLACKJACK ROADHOUSE - Marshall Lawrence (Blues) - 2:30 AM - NO COVER

Friday Oct 15**Live Music**

BLACKJACK ROADHOUSE - Marshall Lawrence (Blues) - 2:30 AM - NO COVER

INCLUDES CD

BLUE CHAIR CAFE - Super Hot (Folk) - 8 PM - NO COVER

BLUES ON WHITE - The Northern (Blues) - 9 PM -

CAROUSEL COFFEE AND COFFEE HOUSE - Doc Watson (Blues) - 7 PM - NO COVER

EARLY STAGE SALOON - The Man Marhuza Band (Inst. Many Marhuza (Country) Feat) - 8:30 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

FESTIVAL PLACE - The Separates (Blues, Folk, Gospel) - 7:30 PM - \$20 AND UP IN ADVANCE. SERVICE CHARGES MAY APPLY, CHECK WEBSITE FOR TIX

FOURTH STREET CAFE - The Dino Tortorella The (Inst. Ohio Mountain Boys) - 7 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

GLENORA BISTRO - Liquid Metal Heavy (Folk) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

JEFFREY'S CAFE & WINE BAR - Jeff Dolman (Alt, Folk) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

LAKE LIFE & THE METRO ROOM - Kirkpatrick Phillips with Special Guests (Rock) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

THE LOFT - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

LUCKY STAR - The Luckiest (Folk) - 8 PM - NO COVER

MARSHALL LAWRENCE - Marshall Lawrence (Blues) - 8 PM - STAY AT THE DOOR

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MUNICIPAL HAPPENINGS • WITH BILL BENSON

**BY BILL BENSON****MOM'S BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP - WHAT SHOULD WE GET HER?****THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIGURE THIS PROBLEM OUT!****USING COMMUNICATION****MOM, YOU SURE ARE GAY FOR HORSES!**

FOOD ADDICTS ST. LUCES AMERICAN DINER/BAKERY

A live music program for anyone suffering from eating disorders, overeating, and food obsession. Thu. 7 p.m. Info: 403-709-4595-5673

ORGANIZATION FOR BIPOLAR AFFECTIVE DISORDERS

SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF ALBERTA 2010 102-1001 100 Ave. First and third Tu. of every month. Info: 403-468-0700 or 1-800-263-2600. ANONYMOUS 1000 102-1000 100 Ave. 101-1040 100 Ave. Weekly support meetings. Sat. 11 a.m. Info: 403-275-2545.

STITCH & CHAT/CAPITAL COMMUNITY ARTS COFFEE

HOUSE 939-101 Ave. Gathering for fibre arts (knit, croch, cross stitch, sewing) to recharge in their craft. 2nd Wednesday of the month.

ARTS IN EDUCATION BOOK STUDY GROUP

ARTS IN EDUCATION BOOK STUDY GROUP 101-1040 100 Ave. Discussion and support group for those struggling with an alcohol addiction or relapse support in place. Sat. 9 a.m.

TOURETTE SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

104-102 101 St. A support group for parents. First Wed. of every month. 7 p.m. Info: 1-800-674-3784.

WALKING FOR YOUR PARENTS' CONDITION

CONTRIBUTED CONTRIBUTE 101-1040 100 Ave. 1st & 3rd Thursdays. Support group for those who will provide support to parents whose child has died at any age. 6-8 p.m. Info: 1-800-454-0794. Ext. 274. Wednesdays.

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CRUISIN' THE COSMOS

**LIBRA** (SEPT. 23 - OCT. 22)

With winter on its way, you'd best start preparing yourself by Wednesday. Get your cold-weather coat cleaned, throw on those winter tires (includin' the one 'round your waist) and pile up the provisions. If you don't even think about it and let yourself doze, you'll wake up to find your ass has been frozed!

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 - NOV. 21)

You'll soon be upset upon by all sides like Caesar on the 1es, with nowhere to run and less places to hide. Remember, when the daggers come out this week, what makes you Scorpios unique, such as your phoenix-like ability to rise from the ashes of destruction. Look at it this way: You're not a character, but the author of the play. [This time, you're cookin' up a comedy or writer's a romance!]

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21)

You're being a fire sign, flames burn only as bright and as far as their fuel lets 'em. Now, you can spend time consumin' solid materials like sex, food and money, but you're left with so much smoke and soot that it ain't even funny. Ideals such as love, beauty and truth are like gases — they burn brighter and cleaner and don't leave messy ashes!

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 - JAN. 19)

You're stuck in a foxhole and now it seems that you'll never advance or conquer your dreams. Well, don't sweat it. Your magical powers are at a peak this weekend, so call cosmic control for reinforcements and they'll free up a cavalry to send. The odds in your favour'll be pretty large, so dahn-nah-na-na-na — charge!

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)

Now before you jump to action, conclusions or on somebody's back, do your best to cut everyone some slack — especially yourself. Recharge yourself startin' Sunday while the moon's in your sign and your power levels are at their peak. Pamper your own person and let them damn humans take care of themselves for once!

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MARCH 20)

Ever wonder why weasels (the human kind) are always so stressed? They screw with your stuff so they're afraid they'll get messed. If you take advantage, advantages are taken. If you give advantages, advantages are given. Hey, that's just how it is with this wacky karmic livin'!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 19)

When you find yourself fallin' and flillin' about, don't get all down with despair and doubt. It's just because you need to better understand the importance of follow-through to achieve what you've planned. The more you leave things unfinished, the more your confidence'll be diminished!

SAVAGE cont'd from p. 30

transgender porn on his computer. When I asked him about it, he said he just watches all kinds of porn "just to watch it." That sounded like total bullshit to me — and it was proved to be total bullshit when I discovered that he watches ONLY this type of porn. I also recently discovered a letter he had composed a few years back to another man asking him to "hook up," stating that my fiancé had had a one-night stand with another guy and really wanted to do it again. The letter also states that my fiancé had a girlfriend, and since "discretion is very important" to him, he could only hook up when she was out of town.

I can deal with somebody being bisexual. I have bisexual fantasies myself. However, I can't deal with someone lying to himself and to me, and being unfair. Sadly, I can't really make this guy confess to me that he is bi. When I tried, he simply told me, "You are so blind." What does that mean?

I really don't want to dump the guy. I love him. My question is, I guess, what the fuck do I do? I feel like crazy bitch supreme trying to get this out of him, but it's impossible not to think about. *Bitchy Girlfriend*

There's nothing to be confused about: Your fiancé is very clearly bisexual. Gay men just aren't into chicks-with-dicks porn; that's a genre that appeals exclusively to straight/straightish/bisexual viewers.

So why can he be open about his cuckolding with a complete stranger — that dude was sent the letter that you "discovered" — but not with you?

It's a tired cliché, I realize, and I shy away from it for that reason, but in this case the shoe fits: Your fiancé has had a bad case of the internalized homophobias. He finds it easier to be open with someone he doesn't care about and is unlikely to see even again precisely because he doesn't care about that person and isn't going to see him again. If you or the other people in his life's close to knew, he fears you would see him as

damaged or inferior because that's how he sees himself.

So, yep, a bad case of the internalized homophobias. He's not entirely responsible for contracting this malady — our homophobic culture is the disease vector here — but, as an adult, he is responsible for working through it, for overcoming it, for being truthful with himself and the people he claims to love.

If he can't be honest with you — the snoop he claims to love — about his sexual orientation, and if being cheated on is deal breaker for him (and he will cheat on you), don't marry him.

I'm a loud fucker, just like the partner of the woman who wrote in recently. With my consent, my partner uses a pillow to dampen my screams, so I don't have to worry I'll piss off the neighbors. *Lesbian Do Scream*

It's all fun and games — loud fun, ear-splitting games — until someone accidentally asphyxiates a screamer. But thanks for sharing, LDS. Find the *Savage Lovecast* at thesavagelovecast.com/savage

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Daniel Steps Bravely Into The Lion's Den



SAVAGE LOVE DAN SAVAGE

IN WAKE OF RECENT GAY TEEN SUICIDES, CHRISTIAN'S COMMENTS ENRAGE OUR COLUMNIST

I was listening to the radio yesterday morning, and I heard an interview with you about your It Gets Better campaign. I was saddened and frustrated with your comments regarding people of faith and their perpetuation of bullying. As someone who loves the Lord and does not support gay marriage, I can honestly say I was heartbroken to hear about the young man who took his own life.

If your message is that we should not judge people based on their sexual preference, how do you justify judging entire groups of people for any other reason (including their faith)? There is no part of me that took any pleasure

in what happened to that young man, and I know for a fact that is true of many other people who disagree with your viewpoint. To that end, to imply that I would somehow encourage my children to mock, hurt, or intimidate another person for any reason is completely unfounded and offensive. Being a follower of Christ is, above all things, a recognition that we are all imperfect, fallible, and in desperate need of a saviour. We cannot believe that we are better or more worthy than other people.

Please consider your viewpoint, and please be more careful with your words in the future. L.R.

I'm sorry your feelings were hurt by my comments.

No, wait. I'm not. Gay kids are dying. So let's try to keep things in perspective. Fuck your feelings.

A question: Do you "support" atheist marriage? Interfaith marriage? Divorce and remarriage? All are legal, all go against Christian and/or traditional ideas about marriage, and yet there's no "Christian" movement to deny marriage rights to atheists or people marrying outside their re-

spective faiths or people divorcing and remarrying.

Why the hell not?

Sorry, L.R., but so long as you support the denial of marriage rights to same-sex couples, it's clear that you do believe that some people — straight people — are "better or more worthy" than others.

And — sorry — but you are partly responsible for the bullying and physi-

cal violence being visited on vulnerable LGBT children. The kids of people who see gay people as sinful or damaged or disordered are unworthy of full civil equality — even if those people strive to express their bigotry in the politest possible way (at least when they happen to be addressing a gay person) — learn to see gay people as sinful, damaged, disordered, and unworthy. And while these may not be any gay adults or couples where you live, or at your church, or in your workplace, I promise you that there are gay and lesbian children in your schools. And while you can only at-

tack gays and lesbians at the ballot box, nice and impersonally, your children have the option of attacking actual gays and lesbians, in person, in real time.

Real gay and lesbian children. Not political abstractions, not "sinners." Gay and lesbian children.

Try to keep up. The dehumanizing bigotries that fall from the lips of "Faithful Christians," and the lies

encouragement — along with your hatred and fear — is implicit. It's here, it's clear, and we're seeing the fruits of it dead children.

Oh, and those same dehumanizing bigotries that fill your straight children with hate? They fill your gay children with suicidal despair. And you have the nerve to ask me to be more careful with my words? Did that hurt to hear? Good. But it

THE KIDS OF PEOPLE WHO SEE GAY PEOPLE AS SINFUL OR DAMAGED OR DISORDERED AND UNWORTHY OF FULL CIVIL EQUALITY — EVEN IF THOSE PEOPLE STRIVE TO EXPRESS THEIR BIGOTRY IN THE POLITEST POSSIBLE WAY — LEARN TO SEE GAY PEOPLE AS SINFUL, DAMAGED, DISORDERED, AND UNWORTHY.

about us that vomit out from the pulpits of churches that "faithful Christians" drag their kids on Sundays to verbally abuse, humiliate, and condemn the gay children they encounter at school. And many of your children — having listened to Mom and Dad talk about how gay marriage is a threat to family and how gay sex makes their magic sky friend Jesus cry — feel justified in physically abusing the LGBT children they encounter in their schools. You don't have to explicitly "encourage [your] children to mock, hurt, or intimidate" queer kids. Your

couldn't have hurt nearly as much as what was said and done to Asher Brown and Justin Aaberg and Billy Lucas and Cody Barker and Seth Walsh — day-in, day-out for years — at schools filled with bigoted little monsters created not in the image of a loving God, but in the image of the hateful and false "followers of Christ" they call Mom and Dad.

I am engaged to a man whose sexual orientation is somewhat confusing to me.

A few months ago, I discovered

SAVAGE cont'd on p. 29

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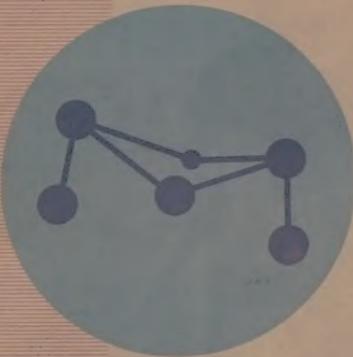
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OUT OF THE BAG exhibition 18

IN THE FIELD exhibition

EDOUARD FRANCOIS lecture 19

SPRAWLING FROM GRACE;

DRIVEN TO MADNESS film screening

PETER CLEWES lecture + panel 20

PANACHE STUDIO PARTY 21

KIRSTEN MURRAY lecture

CITIZEN ARCHITECT film screening 22

GEOFFREY LILGE exhibition + reception

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